



Speech by

Hon. J. ELDER

MEMBER FOR CAPALABA

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BEATTIE LABOR GOVERNMENT

Hon. J. P. ELDER (Capalaba—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development and Minister for Trade) (6.20 p.m.): I second the amendment moved by the Premier. To contrast the difference between this Government and that of the coalition, when I came to office my department had a lot of pretty furniture, although there was not much left in the cupboards. One of my first acts was to provide the Brisbane Technology Park with \$1.4m that had been sitting in my department's budget since the 1997 Budget. That money had been sitting there for 14 months, although it was allocated to provide technology infrastructure to the technology park. That was my first decision and it was a quick decision to make. For 14 months when the Opposition was in Government, that money just languished. The coalition did not understand—but we understand—that technology is important in creating high-tech jobs in Australia. If we are going to drive job creation, we need the infrastructure within Government resources to provide the necessary support. That single decision was made. While members opposite talk about "can't do", that is something that they could not do for 14 months but that I did within the first few weeks of coming to Government.

The Leader of the Opposition whined and whinged when he was previously in Opposition and he whined and whinged when he was the Premier. Now he is happy to be back where he was, because that is his style. He enjoys knocking Queensland and he enjoys whingeing. However, he will hold that position only temporarily because the nest of rats that he moved out has been replaced by a nest of vipers, and they will be more venomous next time. From discussions that I have had with them, it is clear that they understand that the Leader of the Opposition's attitude to Opposition comes from the past. He was comfortable with that attitude before and he is quite comfortable with it now.

In the first few weeks of Government, we initiated contracts with Stellar Communications, Citibank, one of the world's largest financial institutions, and another major corporation. Members opposite know who that is, and we will announce that in the very near future. That has resulted in 1,000 new jobs in call centres. I do not recall any of those opposite being present at the briefings and I do not recall the Leader of the Opposition being present at the discussions with any of those firms. I recall the Premier being there and I recall doing the deal. I recall the signatures on those contracts, but I cannot recall the Leader of the Opposition nor the member for Burnett being there. That deal will mean the creation of 1,000 new jobs within the first few weeks of operation. The coalition Government could not deliver that, even though those groups informed us that they were keen to do business. Despite that, it was this Government—the Premier, myself and the department, whom the member opposite calls duds—that delivered that. If there is any dud in this place, it is the honourable member.

In the next few months I will take great pleasure in introducing into the State a few energy projects that we have been working on for the last few months. When the time comes, I will take great delight in pinning those projects between the eyes of the members opposite. There has been some scuttlebutt and whingeing about CS Energy and Callide, and a suggestion that we would not honour the contracts or build it. I recall turning over the first sod of soil, but I do not recall my critics or, indeed, anyone from the other side of the House being there. The other day they said that they were not invited. I checked with CS Energy and apparently they were notified, but I do not recall any of them being there.

I recall also the comments that Opposition members made about our lack of commitment to water infrastructure, particularly in relation to the Nathan dam. Nothing has changed in relation to that project since the coalition was in Government. SUDAW Developments is still getting the same support

from the same team under me as the State Minister as it received when the member opposite was the Minister. The only difference is that we have had to fix up a bit of his sloppy work. The only critic has been Senator Robert Hill, who is from the same side of politics as members opposite. No-one from this side of politics has been critical. The only one who said that it will not come to fruition if he has his way is Senator Robert Hill. One can never trust a Liberal!

The Leader of the Opposition got on his high horse and said, "I'll make sure that I deliver it. I'll get Tim Fischer and the Federal Government behind me." Do honourable members know what happened? They did not listen to him! On the same day, Robert Hill said that work had not been done on the EIS. This Government has had to recheck that work. Nothing has changed in relation to the processes on that project. One of the first things that the coalition did when it came into Government was to scrap all industry assistance, and 19,000 jobs were lost in the manufacturing sector within the first six months of the coalition being in power. That is its legacy.

Mr Borbidge: Rubbish. That is rubbish.

Mr ELDER: The record is there. It is not rubbish. The record is in black and white; it is in the ABS figures. In the first seven months of this Government, 11,000 jobs were created in manufacturing. The coalition formed a never, never, never Government.

Time expired.
